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and

A Happy New Year
to every man, woman and
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In "Christmas Town"

How the Day is Celebrated in Bethlehem, Pa.

CHRISTMAS TOWN is in its glory on Christmas. Christmas town is the quaint old village in Pennsylvania which was named Bethlehem 174 years ago by Count Zinzendorf, head and founder of the Moravian faith.

The count arrived in the settlement on Dec. 24, 1741. That evening he took a lighted candle and entered the stable belonging to the single lay stone dwelling of the place, and then and there, with the smell of the hay about him, he named the town that was to be Bethlehem—"Nicht Jerusalem, sondern Bethlehem" ("Not Jerusalem, but Bethlehem").

Every Christmas eve since then has had its "vigil." Every Moravian home has its Christmas tree, danked by "putzen." A putz is a beautiful bit of indoor landscape gardening, with fuzzy white cotton for snow and always a tiny stable of Bethlehem, with a doll Christ in a six inch manger, and doll Joseph, Mary and wise men standing by, while a tinsel star of the east shines with undiminished ray.

Three o'clock on the afternoon of Dec. 24 finds every Moravian family in the great stone church, built in 1806. All the babies are there, hundreds of babies, wide eyed in admiration of the decorations. The vestibule is full of baby carriages. The pulpit and reading desk are concealed by a big picture of the Nativity.

Classical music of the utmost beauty is sung at the love feast service. It is special Moravian music, often sung from manuscript scores over a hundred years old, which when not in use are kept in the great archive vaults of the church. Pews out the great choruses, thanking the infant Jesus for his benefactions.

Then the "diener," or sacristans, men and women, enter the great front doors. The men carry huge trays of steaming cups of coffee, the white capped women delicious Moravian buns, those wonderful buns prepared by three generations of hereditary Moravian bakers.

Dinner at 5 o'clock over, the men, women and larger children return at 6 for the "vigil." The church is ablaze with lights, crowded to overflowing. There is a choir of about sixty, married women wearing pink ribbons in their caps, the unmarried girls blue.

There is the famous Moravian trombone choir, with a full string orchestra and the skillful organist at the organ. And the children do their share of the singing. Again each person in the audience, young or old, receives a lighted candle in memory of the one borne by Count Zinzendorf so many years ago. Even the choir members hold tapers as they sing.

The Christ Child.

Oh, the beauty of the Christ Child,
The gentleness, the grace,
The smiling, loving tenderness,
The infantile embrace!
All babyhood he holdeth,
All motherhood infoldeth,
Yet who hath seen his face?

Oh, the nearness of the Christ Child
When for a sacred space
He nestles in our very homes,
Light of the human race!
We know him and we love him,
No man to us need prove him,
Yet who hath seen his face?

—Mary Mapes Dodge.

HUNTING FOR S-CLAUS



Hymn For Christmas Morning.

Hark, a burst of heavenly music
From a band of seraphs bright,
Suddenly to earth descending,
In the calm and silent night.
To the shepherds of Judea,
Watching in the early dawn
Lo, they bear the joyful tidings—
Jesus, Prince of Peace, is born!

Sweet and clear those angel voices,
Echoing through the starry sky,
As they chant the heavenly chorus,
"Glory be to God on high!"

And this joyful Christmas morning
Breaking o'er the world below
Tells again the wondrous story
Shepherds heard so long ago.
Who shall still our tuneful voices,
Who the tale of praise shall stem,
Which the blessed angels taught us
In the fields of Bethlehem?

Hark, we hear again the chorus
Ringing "hallelujah" swarthy sky,
And we see the heavenly anthem
"Gloria" to God on high!"

—Mrs. M. N. Moses.

The City's Christmas Trees.

A woman, they say, thought of the first community Christmas tree. It was erected in Madison square, in New York city. There was something stimulating, something highly infectious, in the idea, for now cities and villages all over America are erecting Christmas trees in their public squares, says the Delinestor.

They are wonderful things, these community Christmas trees, not for their beauty alone, but for the spirit they arouse in the towns where they are found. They are the village center for Christmas joy. Christmas services, without sectarian barriers, are held about them. Christmas carols are sung at their bases. None so poor or so world worn or so hurried but he must see, must thrill with friend and stranger alike to this tree for all the world. It brings the child in the manger to every soul in the community.

The Christmas tree is essentially a symbol of the north and of the home. Yet it is inextricably blended in our minds with our faith, which is desert bred.

Most of the great religions of the world were born of some solitary spirit who sought the lonely sand waste and there wrought out that which made the desert of his soul "Eden like the rose." He who gave us the great faith went again and again into the burning yellow barrens, where the tender, brooding, violet sky awaited him; where all the desert world, so fearful in its undergrowth, so overwhelming in its solitude, found focused in him all its pulsing radiance, as though in him were centered the heartbeat of the universe. In the verdant, sand driven, star hung desert the Babe with his listening ear heard, with his dreaming eyes saw, with his throbbing heart felt, the faith that turned man's bones forever from the clod to the cross.

Why, then, should the fir tree stand in our public square, sign and symbol of that desert birth? Whatever its physical history, why should breathless thousands, hungry of body or of spirit, looking on the great pine tree hung with electric bulbs, backed by skyscrapers, topped by smoke, find in its incoherent beauty the urge set in motion by the desert bred Babe?

One would have said, of the home Christmas trees that, after all, it was the gifts that gave them their glamour. There are no gifts on the community Christmas trees, yet thousands and thousands of us look on them with the thrill that belongs to faith alone. One wonders why.

Perhaps this is the reason: The community Christmas tree symbolizes that which the home Christmas tree does not. It symbolizes Christmas for all the world. It means that the dawn of real brotherhood is tinging our horizon. It means, and particularly this Christmas it means, that in spite of poverty and bloodshed, in spite of greed and despair, there are in increasing numbers in the world those who would share with the world all that sacred beauty and hope that are the individual's holy of holies, the most difficult of all one's spiritual riches to share.

It is the symbol of green forest beauty, of the druid's wild faith, of the Teuton's largeness and always of giving. Nor strange that forever in our minds it should be inseparable from the birthday of him who gave supremacy; not strange, but utterly soul satisfying, that finally we have joined our hands and placed the Christmas tree in the market place—symbol that, at last, man may give himself to man.

"God bless us," said Tiny Tim on Christmas day, "God bless us every one!" Dickens dreamed of a Christmas festival that should belong to all. His Tiny Tim, lame and wistful, might have foreshadowed the joy starved world that now crowds around the market place tree, saying as he said, "God bless us every one!"

Washington's City Christmas.

"Peace on Earth, Good Will to Men." This sentence, blazing from a brilliantly lighted electric placard raised almost to the dome of the capitol, reflected the predominant sentiment of thousands who assembled at the capitol plaza to celebrate Washington's "community Christmas." A giant Norway spruce, illuminated with glimmering red, white and blue electric bulbs; the Marine band, a huge electric star of the east and a chorus of 1,000 singers, with the capitol itself outlined as the background against the dark curtain of the sky, made a scene of impressive beauty. Tableaux representing the story of the Nativity were presented in the improvised amphitheater. In the audience were many men and women well known throughout the country, including high government officials.

ON CHRISTMAS EVE



Do Your Xmas Shopping in Alma where you can buy of the home merchants and be assured of honest dealings



Are Men Hard to Please?

As usual the ordeal of Christmas shopping is to buy something to please Hubby, Daddy or the Sweetheart. We know that an automobile as a gift, would produce about the limit in pleasure for any man, but to the few who can not afford an auto as a gift this year, here are a few suggestions: Most men love to smoke. Why? Just cause, simple is it not? The same reason explains why a man would be pleased to find a nice fancy pipe in a dandy plush lined case or a swell box of cigars in his stocking. We have lots and lots of other things that smokers use, such as cigar holders, fancy gold trimmed ones in plush cases, price 50c and up; cigar cases, cigarette cases, humidors of tobacco, all prices; fancy pipes, prices 50c and up; special Christmas packages of cigars, all prices. There are so many things that we want you to be sure and SEE OUR WINDOW DISPLAY, before buying. Best of all, and prices are right.

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Do Your Shopping Early.

What is a more appropriate gift for the Father, Mother, Brother or Sister than a pair of shoes, slippers, leggings or slumber socks?

The Meyer Dry Sox for Father.

Men's Dress Shoes \$2 to \$6

E. P. Reed Shoes for Mother \$1.50 to \$5

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Child's Leggings 25c to \$1

Slumber Sox 10c to 25c

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